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WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2002

February 28, 2003

The Honorable Thomas J. Ridge
Secretary
Department of Homeland Security
3801 Nebraska Ave., NW
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Secretary Ridge:

During a February 13th Senate Budget Committee hearing, I asked Deputy Secretary of Transportation Michael Jackson a series of questions regarding compensation for three General Aviation airports that have been adversely impacted as a result of recent regulations promulgated by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the Transportation Security Administration (TSA). Deputy Secretary Jackson noted that this issue was under the purview of the Department of Homeland Security, and indicated that he would raise the issue with you. To date, I have yet to receive a response.

As I stated during the hearing, these new restrictions have effectively halted operations at College Park Airport, Washington Executive, and Potomac Airfield, taking a heavy toll on operations and employee personal income and revenues of the airport owners and businesses based at the airports. The three airports are currently operating at about 15 percent of their pre-September 11th levels. Lee Schiek, the Airport Manager of College Park Airport, noted in a February 11th *Washington Post* article that flights in and out of College Park plummeted from about 1800 per month to 164 last month, and 55 of its 87 based aircraft have left for other airports. The new restrictions will mean even bleaker prospects for these three airports.

I asked Deputy Secretary Jackson what the Administration's plans to do in order to compensate these airports and their fixed-base operators for their losses in revenues and income during this restriction period. All of these airports were effectively closed through no fault of their own for national security reasons, and it is incumbent on the Federal government to provide relief for their financial losses incurred during these restrictions.

As time passes, the devastating economic impact of these flight restrictions becomes increasingly severe. I look forward to your timely response to this matter.

With best regards,

Sincerely,



Paul Sarbanes
United States Senator